



**STATE OF TENNESSEE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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JOHN J. DREYZEHNER, MD, MPH  
COMMISSIONER

BILL HASLAM  
GOVERNOR

October 17, 2016

Dear Colleague,

I appreciate your ongoing partnership with the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) in protecting the health of our population. As you likely know, local transmission of Zika virus continues in Miami, Florida. Tennessee has had 53 cases, all due to travel to other countries. Because of rapidly changing events and guidance I want you to be aware of the following:

- Zika virus testing (both serology and PCR) is available at commercial laboratories. Guidelines on persons for whom testing may be appropriate are available at: <https://apps.health.tn.gov/ReportableDiseases/ReportableDisease.aspx/DiseasePageList?dname=Zika>
- Pregnant women should continue to avoid non-essential travel to areas with evidence of ongoing Zika transmission (<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html>). People should consult with their families and medical providers regarding their personal risk tolerance.
- NEW: Men with possible Zika virus exposure, regardless of symptom status, should wait to conceive until at least 6 months after symptom onset, or last possible Zika virus exposure (if asymptomatic). Women with possible Zika virus exposure are recommended to wait to conceive until at least 8 weeks after symptom onset or last possible exposure. ([http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6539e1.htm?s\\_cid=mm6539e1\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6539e1.htm?s_cid=mm6539e1_w))
- Blood and body fluids of severely ill patients might be infectious. It is essential that health care workers continue to apply standard precautions while caring for all patients, including those who might have Zika virus disease. ([http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6536e4.htm?s\\_cid=mm6536e4\\_w/](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6536e4.htm?s_cid=mm6536e4_w/))
- NEW: Infected pregnant women can have evidence of Zika virus in their blood for longer than previously thought, and even pregnant women without symptoms can have evidence of the virus in their blood and urine. Symptomatic and asymptomatic exposed pregnant women can undergo PCR testing up to 14 days after symptom onset or possible exposure. Beyond the 2 week time frame, symptomatic pregnant women should receive

antibody tests for both Zika and dengue virus. Those without symptoms should undergo Zika antibody testing. (<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/pdfs/mm6529e1.pdf>)

Extensive additional resources are available at <https://tn.gov/health/topic/zika-virus>. You may also, as always, reach our state health department staff for urgent matters, at (615) 741-7247.

TDH is continuing to closely monitor Zika virus within our borders and providing educational information to Zika-infected persons and at-risk persons in their communities. Thank you for your ongoing contributions to public health in our state. We will continue to provide you with updates as relevant information becomes available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Dreyzehner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small circle at the end of the last name.

John J. Dreyzehner, MD, MPH, FACOEM  
Commissioner